UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/140
19 April 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session
Item 120 of the preliminary list*

JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with article 9, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the work programme of the Unit for 1995 and the preliminary work programme for 1996 and beyond.

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Annex

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT FOR 1995 AND PRELIMINARY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1996 AND BEYOND

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The following work programme has been drawn up in accordance with article 9, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 31/192 of 22 December 1976, and takes into account the guidelines laid out in Assembly resolutions 42/218 of 21 December 1987, 43/221 of 21 December 1988, 44/184 of 19 December 1989 and 45/237 of 21 December 1990, decision 46/446 of 20 December 1991, resolution 47/201 of 22 December 1992 and resolution 48/221 of 23 December 1993. The work programme is divided into two sections: section II lists the Unit's work programme for 1995, and section III indicates those reports which the Unit contemplates undertaking after the current year. As hitherto, the work programme is subject to change in the course of the year: new reports may be added; planned reports may be modified, postponed or cancelled, when circumstances warrant; and titles may be changed to reflect the new thrust of reports.

II. WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1995

A. Reports on management, budgetary and administrative issues

1. An investigation into the management-Staff Union relationship in the United Nations system

2. The report will examine the objectives, mandates and activities of staff unions and staff associations as they relate to the effective management of the organizations of the United Nations system. It will test a number of working hypotheses which have arisen from its preliminary investigations: first, that management appears to give the staff unions extravagant perquisites and yields to them on virtually all unimportant, non-policy matters while simultaneously freezing them out of any meaningful participation in decision-making; and secondly, that improved staff-management relations have the potential to improve the functioning of the organizations of the United Nations system.

2. Advancement of women through and in the programmes of the United Nations system: What happens after the Fourth World Conference on women?

3. The year 1995 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Charter and its establishment of the principle of "equal rights of men and women", the end of two decades of collective United Nations programmes for women, and the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing in September 1995. It is clear that there have been significant breakthroughs and

advances for women through and in United Nations system programmes, particularly since the world conferences began. At the same time, progress is disappointing in the light of the two decades and (soon to be) four conferences that have come and gone, and there is an obvious need to consider decisive actions to ensure that women's programmes and advancement sustain a dynamic character rather than becoming a tedious ritual and routine. The focus of the review will be on top priority and specific issues and problems, and on innovations that can lead to specific action solutions in 1995 and beyond to accelerate women's advancement in the United Nations system overall.

3. Management in the United Nations Secretariat

4. One of the central themes in the JIU system-wide review of accountability and oversight is the importance of management performance and structures. Many organizations and inter-organizational bodies are taking very significant initiatives in management development and training, performance management, structural reviews by external consultants, and reforms to compress hierarchical structures and increase management flexibility and the use of work teams.

5. In contrast to the foregoing activities and the clear admonition in Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter favouring efficiency, competence and integrity, a serious lack of a "management culture" in the United Nations Secretariat is increasingly recognized. Except for the recommendations of the "Group of 18" in 1986 and a one-time staffing analysis made in 1988, there has been little effort in the recent past to assess Secretariat management structures. Indeed, status information has almost disappeared, to the annoyance of the General Assembly, with no staff lists, little control of manning tables, and no telephone directories, but much shuffling of organizational components. However, in response to the Assembly's demands, the Secretariat has promised to re-establish information on staffing and structures to strengthen management training, and to establish new accountability and performance management systems. An independent JIU review of these pledges and an overall assessment of Secretariat management and its structures can help to meet the General Assembly's concerns.

4. Common services of United Nations organizations in New York

6. In line with two previous JIU reports on this subject, namely, "Common services of United Nations organizations at the Vienna International Centre" (A/39/520, annex) and "United Nations system common premises and services in the field" (A/49/629, annex), the Inspectors will review the management of support services currently shared by New York-based organizations (United Nations Secretariat, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)), and will recommend measures where necessary for improving the efficiency, transparency and costing of the services in question.

7. This review, to be followed in 1996 by an inspection of common services in Geneva, will also suggest some guiding principles for the development and management of common services at the organizations' headquarters locations with

a twofold objective: first, to enable the organizations located in the same vicinity to collaborate more closely in the provision of support services in order to achieve economies of scale and maximum overhead cost savings; secondly, to make the establishment of common services at the global headquarters level a fundamental prerequisite for the successful achievement at the field level of common facilities and services as well as harmonized policies and procedures, as urged by the General Assembly in several resolutions, especially 42/197 of 11 December 1987 and 44/211 of 22 December 1989.

5. A system-wide comparative review of methods of geographical distribution

8. The purpose of the study is to compare formulas used in the common system to arrive at an equitable geographical distribution in the light of recent world-wide changes which have increased the number of Member States, while the number of posts subject to geographical distribution has remained the same or is getting smaller.

9. The inter-agency study will take into account, inter alia, factors that affect geographical quota determination factors such as membership, contribution, population, etc., in order to make appropriate recommendations to improve the current situation.

6. Travel in the United Nations: Issues of efficiency and cost savings

10. The objective of the report is to evaluate United Nations travel from the point of view of the most economical use of resources, both human and financial, as well as good management practices. JIU has in the past issued a number of reports on travel, the last one in 1982 (A/37/357, annex) with a follow-up report in 1985 (A/41/121, annex). The current report will ascertain the extent to which previous JIU recommendations have been implemented and will review the initiatives taken by the Secretariat to improve management of travel, both within the house and vis-à-vis air carriers and travel agencies. It will examine and evaluate whether the existing mechanisms, procedures, rules and regulations are up to the requirement of securing efficient and economical use of travel resources. The report under preparation will cover Headquarters, the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna and the regional commissions. This report is a JIU contribution to the intention of the General Assembly, expressed in a number of its resolutions and decisions, to review and evaluate the current system of United Nations travel services and allowances.

7. United Nations access control system (card access system)

11. In a commendable effort to tighten security arrangements at United Nations Headquarters premises, the United Nations Secretariat decided in 1991 to install an electronic access control system (UNACS), the contract for which was awarded on 27 August 1991 to Westinghouse Electric Corporation in the amount of US$ 1,188,764, subsequently scaled down to US$ 938,764 on 19 November 1992.

12. However, in June 1994 the United Nations Secretariat decided to abandon this project which, though already paid for by the Organization, was no longer considered realistic in terms of the recurrent costs and practical procedures required to operate the electronic access system. The purpose of the JIU investigation, therefore, is to probe the decision-making process that led to the commissioning and subsequent abandonment of this system, with a view to deriving lessons for the future in the judicious use of the Organization's limited resources. Since the Office of Internal Oversight Services is conducting an investigation on the same subject, JIU is awaiting its outcome in order to determine the pertinence of keeping it in the 1995 JIU work programme.

8. Inspection of the application of United Nations recruitment, placement and promotion policies "Part II - Placement and promotion"

13. In 1993, a new placement and promotion system was introduced in the United Nations Secretariat. It sets out elaborate procedures for creating departmental panels, with equal representation from staff and management, and calls for vacancies to be advertised and reviewed on an ongoing basis. It also permits recourse and involves the established appointment and promotion bodies. However, for a variety of reasons, the new placement and promotion system appears to be unattractive to many staff and managers. The Inspectors intend to examine the functioning of the current system with a view to suggesting measures for its improvement.

B. Reports on operational activities for development

9. United Nations system development cooperation in science and technology: Latin America and the Caribbean

14. Since the adoption in 1979 of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development, 1/ this subject has become a prominent feature of the legislative directives and the substantive and operational programmes of organizations within the United Nations system. In line with relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), this report seeks to evaluate, on the basis of selected projects, the effective contribution of the United Nations system in supporting indigenous capacity-building in science and technology. The evaluation findings will be contained in three separate reports covering Africa (A/50/125-E/1995/19, Annex), Asia and the Pacific (soon to be published) and Latin America and the Caribbean, the third and last one. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) requested this evaluation.

10. Evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

15. This system-wide evaluation, was requested by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its May 1994 session in accordance with the monitoring and

evaluation arrangements provided for in General Assembly resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991. In that resolution the Assembly adopted the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and called upon organizations of the United Nations system to play a major role in its implementation. Accordingly, the Inspectors will assess the adequacy of programme and operational adjustments and other measures initiated by the organizations at headquarters, regional and country levels in support of the implementation of the New Agenda, in line with resolution 46/151 and subsequent ones on this subject.

C. Peace-keeping and related operations

11. Military component of United Nations peace operations

16. The present report complements the previous JIU report entitled "Staffing of the United Nations peace-keeping and related missions (civilian component)", issued in 1993 (A/48/421, annex). Its objective is to contribute to current efforts for improving the capability of the United Nations for planning and managing the military component of peace operations. For this purpose, JIU will review the present situation with regard to military arrangements for peace operations, types and availability of forces, including rotation of troops, stand-by arrangements, rapid reaction force and unity of command, as well as prerequisites for successful operations, such as legal arrangements, training and information on military operations.

12. Strengthening the United Nations system's capacity for conflict prevention

17. As a result of multi-billion dollar expenses by Member States and organizations of the United Nations system on peace-keeping and humanitarian operations in response to various forms of conflict situations around the world, and of the experience acquired from these operations, the present concept and strategy of peace-keeping operations have come under intense scrutiny in the relevant policy organs of the United Nations. There seems to be an emerging consensus on two points: (a) United Nations involvement in peace-keeping should be scaled back and authorized limited operations should be conducted with greater cost effectiveness; and (b) there should be increasing emphasis on preventive strategies and programmes that address the economic, social and other root causes of conflicts.

18. The proposed JIU report would deal with the capacity of the United Nations for conflict prevention. It will focus on strengthening this capacity, including that of addressing the root causes of conflict, "which all too often lie in the absence of economic opportunities and social inequities" (A/50/60-S/1995/1, para. 103).

D. Humanitarian assistance

13. Investigation of the relationship between humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations

19. Increased United Nations involvement in peace-keeping operations in areas of internal and regional conflicts has been linked with humanitarian interventions. Consequently, opportunities have arisen for humanitarian organizations to perform in conflict areas side by side with United Nations peace-keeping forces.

20. The need for a close working relationship between the components of these operations has brought into sharp focus the urgent necessity to examine the complex nature of humanitarian assistance in conflict situations. The overriding objective is to improve cooperation among the different actors within the limits of their respective mandates and define more clearly guidelines of action. Furthermore, the risk involved in such operations calls for more attention to be given to the protection of staff engaged in humanitarian activities as well as relief personnel.

21. This study, requested by UNICEF and welcomed by other humanitarian agencies as well as by UNDP, will investigate, seek and suggest mechanisms for harmonizing policies on peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance by the United Nations, the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations. It will consider arrangements in force and analyse efforts under way to identify ways and means for increased efficiency and security in complex emergencies. The report will examine the interaction between the military and the humanitarian functions in the light of the safeguarding of the neutrality and impartiality of United Nations interventions.

14. Involvement of the United Nations system in providing and coordinating humanitarian assistance

22. Over the last few years, the United Nations system has seen an increasing involvement in humanitarian assistance and emergency relief, both in natural and man-made situations of disaster and emergency work, and especially in connection with peace-keeping operations of various kinds. Much of this effort by many parts of the United Nations system has sprung up in an urgent response to circumstances and the changing world without time to determine appropriate frameworks objectively. Some initiatives of coordination have been developed and could possibly be extended and adjusted to meet changing circumstances, including consideration of the need for preventive action.

23. The study will be a critical policy and organizational assessment of the organizational planning framework and approaches used by various parts of the United Nations system in providing, distributing and coordinating humanitarian assistance. The main purpose will be to establish a system of coordination and operation which, within the existing level of institutional management capacity, would lead to better planning and operational management by the United Nations system as a whole, with the result that scarce human and material resources are

utilized more appropriately in the provision and coordination of humanitarian assistance in the context of the overall work of the United Nations system.

III. PRELIMINARY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1996 AND BEYOND 2/

24. As indicated in its previous annual reports, JIU has been working to develop "a more comprehensive work-programming framework and strategy". 3/ Although the Unit will continue to be responsive to problems of urgency which arise during the course of the year, it believes it important to indicate the longer-range direction of its work programme. By so doing, it will not only give greater coherence to the annual work programme, but should also encourage helpful feedback from Member States and participating organizations.

25. There are four principal and interrelated areas of concentration envisaged for the JIU work programme for 1996 and beyond: management, budgetary and administrative issues, operational activities for development, peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance. The following are indications of subjects of inspection, investigation and evaluation where the Unit intends to pursue its work in 1996 and beyond. Most of these subjects are requests from the legislative organs and the secretariats of the participating organizations, whereas others are generated internally.

A. Management, budgetary and administrative issues

1. Common services in Geneva - Part II (initiated internally)

2. Use of information technology in the United Nations system (initiated internally)

3. Inspection of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (initiated internally)

4. System-wide review of ways to improve programming methodology: System-wide review of planning, programming and budgeting procedures (suggested by ESCWA)

5. Review of procurement policies and procedures (suggested by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO))

6. A review of printing arrangements within the United Nations system (suggested by FAO)

7. Costs involved for the system as a whole in preparing and disseminating the larger number of reports and studies mandated by General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions (suggested by the World Food Programme)

8. Cost/benefit analysis of the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat and related efforts to streamline United Nations

activities (suggested by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS))

9. Investigation of the Centre for Human Rights (suggested by OIOS)

10. Construction of a United Nations Conference Centre at Addis Ababa for the Economic Commission for Africa, and at Bangkok for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (suggested by the Office of Conference and Support Services of the United Nations Secretariat)

11. Subcontracting in the United Nations system (initiated internally)

12. An analysis of the number, size and cost of conferences, seminars, workshops and other meetings and gatherings in the technical cooperation programmes of the United Nations system (suggested by UNDP)

B. Development and cooperation

13. Relationship between the funding agencies of the United Nations system and the United Nations Secretariat, particularly regional commissions and the United Nations Population Fund (suggested by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)

14. Cooperation between Global Environment Facility implementing agencies and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system (suggested by FAO)

15. Financial and administrative implications of a meaningful UNDP presence and activities in the net contributor countries (suggested by UNDP)

16. Strengthening field representation and operations in the context of decentralization of organizations within the United Nations system (follow-up Note) (suggested by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization)

C. Peace-keeping and related operations

17. Problems of the start-up phase of peace-keeping operations (upon specific request from the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session)

18. Coordination at Headquarters and field level, within the framework of "An Agenda for Peace", between the United Nations agencies in peace building: an assessment of the possibilities

19. Peace-keeping operations office and living-quarters camps; budgeting, procurement, management and removal from one mission and reinstallation in another mission (initiated internally)

D. Humanitarian affairs and related operations

20. An assessment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and other bodies concerned on their humanitarian activities (initiated internally)

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, Vienna, 20-31 August 1979 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.I.21 and corrigenda), chap. VII.

2/ This work programme is only a tentative one. It does not necessarily imply that JIU will undertake the studies.

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 34 (A/46/34), para. 23.